



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

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A copy of the indictment and Notice of Intent to Seek the Death Penalty are available on the web page

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U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO SEEK THE DEATH PENALTY IN MURDER CASE

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that pursuant to authorization received on July 29, 2004, from Attorney General John Ashcroft, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Kansas has today filed a Notice of Intent to Seek the Death Penalty in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas, against **Demetrius R. Hargrove**. Hargrove, 31, Kansas City, Kansas, is currently serving a 35 year federal sentence for prior convictions of kidnaping and using a firearm during a crime of violence.

Hargrove was charged by a federal grand jury in December 2003 with two counts of premeditated murder using a firearm; one count of premeditated murder to prevent a witness from testifying in a jury trial; one count of attempted murder with the intent to prevent a witness from testifying in a jury trial, and conspiracy to commit murder.

The indictment alleges that on February 19, 1998, Hargrove intentionally murdered Elmer Berg and Misty Castor with a gun during a drug trafficking crime. The indictment further alleges that on July 25, 1998, Hargrove intentionally murdered Tyrone Richards to prevent Richards from testifying at the jury trial of U.S. v. Christopher Trotter in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas, and that the murder involved torture and serious physical abuse of the victim. The indictment alleges that from December 31, 1998, through January 3, 1999, Hargrove conspired with others to attempt to kill another witness to prevent the witness from testifying at the jury trial of U.S. v. Demetrius Hargrove in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas. The indictment also alleges that on January 3, 1999, Hargrove attempted to murder this witness to prevent the witness from testifying. The indictment further alleges that on December 31, 1998, and January 1, 1999, Hargrove made telephone calls to other conspirators from the Corrections Corporation of America detention facility located in Leavenworth, Kansas, to arrange the murder of this witness.

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The case was investigated by the FBI and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Robert Streepy and Terra Morehead.

“The U.S. Department of Justice seeks the death penalty in only the most egregious cases,” said U.S. Attorney Eric Melgren. “This indictment alleges that these offenses were committed in an especially heinous, cruel, and depraved manner with reckless disregard for human life. It was only after somber and serious analysis that this decision was made. I commend the FBI for its thorough investigation and assistance in this case.”

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The charges filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.